

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 L-03 PA-01 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 /087 W

-----090566 131810Z /46 L

P R 131300Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 748

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 345

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PINS, MOPS, ASEC, DJ, SO,ET

SUBJ: ALI MIRAH VISIT TO BE SHORT

REF: DJIBOUTI 316

1. ALI MIRAH WAS PERMITTED TO ENTER COUNTRY ON AFTERNOON MARCH 9. ON FRIDAY MORNING, 10 MARCH, THE LOCAL WEEKLY RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY, THE ITINERANT SULTAN WAS SUMMONED TO THE PRESIDENT'S GUEST HOUSE AT ARTA, 20 MILES FROM DJIBOUTI. IN THE PRESENCE
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OF THE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER ABDALLAH KAMIL, MINISTER OF INTERIOR, MOUMIN BAHDON AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE, ISMAIL ALI YOUSSEUF, THE AFAR LEADER WAS TOLD CLEARLY THAT HIS VISIT WAS UNWELCOME. ACCORDING TO THE PRIME MINISTER, THE PRESIDENT WAS UNEXPECTEDLY EFFECTIVE AND DECISIVE IN THIS INTERVIEW.

2. THE AFAR SULTAN OFFERED NO DEFENSE FOR HIS UNUSUAL MEANS

OF ENTERING THE COUNTRY. HE NOTED ONLY THAT HE HAD BEEN PERMITTED BY THE FRENCH TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY TEN DAYS BEFORE BEING EXPELLED DURING HIS LAST VISIT IN 1976. APPARENTLY, A LARGE, FAT MAN, THE SULTAN WAS IN BAD PHYSICAL CONDITION AFTER HIS 1200 MILE JAUNT ACROSS SOMALIA. FOR THIS REASON, THE PRESIDENT SAID HE COULD STAY A FEW DAYS UNTIL HE IS ABLE TO RETURN TO SAUDI ARABIA.

3. THE SULTAN WAS ACCOMPANIED ON HIS TRIP ACROSS SOMALIA BY DJIBOUTI MINISTER OF JUSTICE ISMAIL ALI YOUSSEF, WHO DISAPPEARED FROM DJIBOUTI ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO. HIS ROLE IN THE RETURN OF ALI MIRAH HAS PUT HIM IN BAD LIGHT WITH BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE DJIBOUTI AFAR COMMUNITY. IT HAS ALSO BEEN REPORTED THAT THE SOMALI AMBASSADOR TO DJIBOUTI, HOUSSEIN MOHAMOUD MOHAMED, MAY HAVE ACCOMPANIED THE SULTAN FROM HARGEISA.

4. THE ETHIOPIAN REACTION TO THE VISIT IS NOT YET KNOWN. HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT HAS ASSURED THE LOCAL ETHIOPIAN CHARGE THAT THE VISIT WAS NOT THE DESIRE OF THE DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT AND THAT ALI MIRAH WILL BE MOVING ON SOON.
CLARKE

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NNN

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